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Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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Structured dialogue on financing

Strategic brief on resource mobilization

Summary

The present strategic brief on resource mobilization is submitted pursuant to decision 2014/6 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) as part of its structured dialogue on the financing of the strategic plan, 2014-2017. The dialogue is to be held during the second regular session of 2015 in the context of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

In the brief, UN-Women highlights the resources necessary to fully implement the strategic plan and to achieve transformational results for women and girls worldwide. It outlines some of the risks of not achieving an adequate level of funding and the steps that it has taken to progressively reach that level by mobilizing both regular and other resources.

Key strategies detailed in the brief include increasing and sustaining core contributions from current government donors, emerging donors and the private sector; and strengthening and diversifying current sources of non-core resources, on the basis of UN-Women flagship programming initiatives and dedicated funding mechanisms.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present brief on resource mobilization as an element of the Entity's ongoing structured dialogue on the financing of its strategic plan and to encourage a continuing dialogue with Member States towards the development of an analysis on the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided for the implementation of the strategic plan, including on funding gaps. Elements of a decision are included in section VII of the brief.

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I. Background and context

1. The mandate for the structured dialogue on financing comes from the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in General Assembly resolution 67/226. In paragraph 46 of the resolution the General Assembly requested, in this regard, the executive boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, as appropriate, to organize structured dialogues during 2014 on how to finance the development results agreed in the new strategic planning cycle of their respective entities, with a view to making non-core resources more predictable and less restricted/earmarked, broadening the donor base and improving the adequacy and predictability of resource flows.

2. To respond to this quadrennial comprehensive policy review mandate, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) convened the first informal consultation with the UN-Women Executive Board during its second regular session of 2014, on 15 September 2014. The Executive Board decided to engage, on an annual basis, during the second regular session of the Executive Board, in a structured dialogue on financing with Member States to monitor and follow up on the level of funding, in particular of regular resources, as well as predictability, flexibility and alignment of other resources provided for the implementation of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, including information on funding gaps (decision 2014/6).

3. At the same session, the Executive Board requested UN-Women, through a dialogue with the Executive Board, to continue to explore incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to broaden the donor base and to encourage donors to increase their core contributions as well as to shift to less earmarked non-core funding, and towards this end requested the Entity to present to the Board a strategic brief for resource mobilization for consideration at its second regular session of 2015 (decision 2014/6). In advance of the second regular session of 2015, UN-Women, held its second consultation during the first regular session of its Executive Board, on 9 February 2015.

4. The aim of the structured dialogue on financing is to achieve the critical mass of resources required for UN-Women to deliver its strategic plan, including the proportion of regular and other resources, in a manner such that regular resources do not subsidize other resources. The structured dialogue on financing provides an opportunity for UN-Women, in consultation with its contributing partners, to determine the most effective manner to address funding gaps. In preparation for such a dialogue, the present strategic brief provides an overview of the resource mobilization strategy of UN-Women, including:

(a) The complementarity between regular (core) and other (non-core) resources towards implementation of the UN-Women strategic plan;

(b) The programming approach of UN-Women to ensure the mobilization of high-quality other (non-core) resources on a full-cost-recovery basis;

(c) The strategies to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the resource mobilization efforts of UN-Women, including the scaling-up of existing modalities and the introduction of new approaches.

The brief also highlights the risks if UN-Women is unable to secure the required resources to implement its strategic plan.

5. UN-Women conducts its resource mobilization efforts in a context characterized by growing attention, including in intergovernmental outcomes, to gender equality and women's empowerment and a recognition of their importance and of proper resourcing for the achievement of sustainable development, peace and security and human rights. For example, in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development donors were invited to integrate fully commitments and considerations on gender equality and women's empowerment in their decision-making and full programming cycle (para. 244).

6. Similarly, in paragraphs 1 and 6 of the recently adopted outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (General Assembly resolution 69/313), Member States reaffirmed their commitment to ensure gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment and reiterated the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.

7. In the political declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, adopted at its fifty-ninth session, the Commission on the Status of Women called for significantly increased investment to close resource gaps, including through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including domestic resource mobilization and allocation and increased priority on gender equality and the empowerment of women in official development assistance (see E/2015/27, chap. I, sect. C). The expectations of UN-Women for support and engagement have expanded significantly in the context of these intergovernmental processes.

8. It is also expected that the post-2015 development agenda will include a sustainable development goal on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as gender-sensitive targets for other goals. It will be essential for UN-Women to be properly resourced in order to support Member States in the implementation of these commitments, in accordance with its mandate.

II. Critical mass of resources required by UN-Women

9. The critical mass of resources is the minimum level of resources that UN-Women needs in order to fully implement its strategic plan, 2014-2017, as endorsed by the UN-Women Executive Board. The Secretary-General in his comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women emphasized that "total funding requirements for the start-up phase" of UN-Women should be set at $500 million annually. Since its inception, UN-Women has been steadily increasing its resource mobilization towards meeting this annual target of $500 million, taking into account the global financial and economic context, the prior financial performance of the Entity and the projected contributions (see figure I).

10. For the biennium 2014-2015, projected total resources were set at $690 million, divided between regular and other resources at $340 million and $350 million respectively. In 2014, for the first time, UN-Women exceeded its

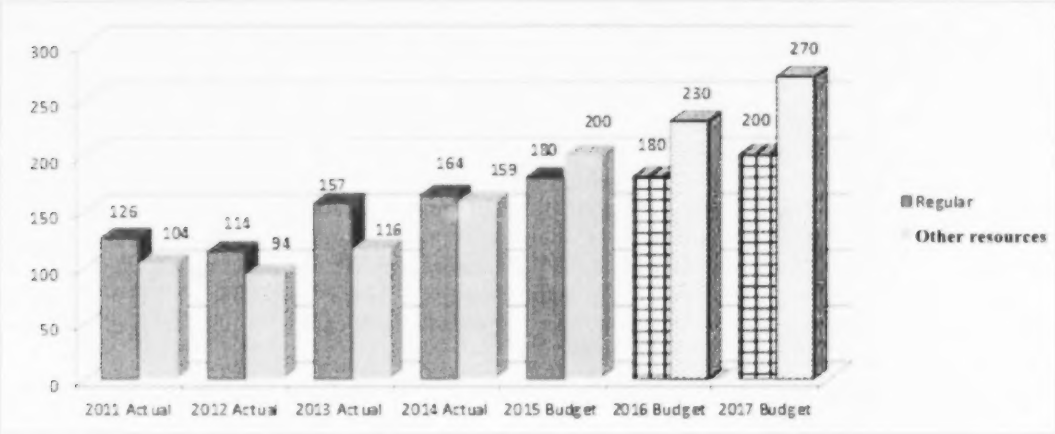
targets, with regular resources reaching $164 million ($160 million was the target) and other resources reaching $159 million ($150 million was the target). This represented significant growth of 17.5 per cent relative to 2013 ($157 million and $118 million respectively).

11. In recognition of the vital need for UN-Women to grow substantially in 2016-2017 and with the aim of reaching the $500 million annual level envisaged by the Secretary-General, UN-Women has set a target of $880 million for the biennium 2016-2017, comprising $380 million in regular resources and $500 million in other resources. These targets are included in the integrated budget to be presented to the Executive Board for its endorsement at its second regular session of 2015.

Figure I

Regular and other resources 2011-2017

(Millions of United States dollars)



12. Given the unique structure of UN-Women as a composite entity, its financing must ensure the proper resourcing of all its functions: normative support functions, United Nations system coordination and operational activities. Accordingly, UN-Women receives a small share of its overall resources via assessed contributions from the United Nations regular budget. For the biennium 2016-2017, this share totals $15.3 million, which is a relatively small amount to cover the wide range of activities related to servicing normative intergovernmental processes, as well as policy and coordination work.

13. The largest share of UN-Women resources comes from voluntary contributions. In line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, UN-Women puts a strong emphasis on the mobilization of core resources. Core resources represent the highest-quality funding and support the implementation of the full range of outcomes set in the strategic plan. They are also essential to ensure that UN-Women has the required institutional capacity to deliver high- impact programmes with transformational results and an adequate institutional structure to absorb greater funding. An adequate level of core resources is therefore essential to preserve the integrity of the strategic plan.

14. UN-Women utilizes core resources for two main purposes, namely:

- To finance foundational advocacy, coordination, advisory, policy development, and operational activities at country, regional and global levels.
- To enable UN-Women to leverage other resources to ensure full implementation of its strategic plan.

15. The main objective of non-core resources is to complement core resources towards achieving results in the strategic plan. In line with recommendations from the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, such resources should be predictable, timely and flexible to minimize transaction costs and the risks of strategic distortions.

III. Risk of not securing a critical mass of resources

16. Despite increasingly widespread recognition of the importance of achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, the high level of political commitment to the gender equality agenda and to UN-Women has not translated into a commensurate financial commitment.

17. The key risk of not securing the required resources is that UN-Women will be unable to maintain the integrity of its strategic plan and achieve transformative change in the lives of women and girls worldwide. In particular, the risk of not securing the critical mass of resources will:

(a) Limit the ability of UN-Women to support its normative work through norm-setting and evidence-based advocacy. A recent evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services highlighted that insufficient resources have made supporting the implementation of norms and standards challenging (E/AC.51/2015/9);

(b) Limit the capacity of UN-Women to ground its normative and policy development efforts in programming experiences in different development contexts and undermine its capacity to act as a knowledge hub for gender equality and women's empowerment;

(c) Compromise the Entity's ability to fully implement operational activities and respond to the growing demand for support by Member States;

(d) Compromise the UN-Women technical and policy support work, notably with regard to regional technical advisory expertise, as planned in the regional architecture and approved by the Executive Board;

(e) Limit the Entity's capacity to develop strategic partnerships and provide substantive coordination for transformative change. UN-Women will be unable to complement the operational work of its partners, and gender equality and women's empowerment may remain unaddressed in critical areas, particularly in fragile States;

(f) Limit the capacity of UN-Women to engage on universal issues and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities from a gender equality perspective, including those pertaining to the sustainable development goals, climate change and disaster risk reduction;

(g) Limit the Entity's capacity to fully mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in the work of the United Nations development system at all levels, including with resident coordinators and country teams.

18. To address this risk, the overarching goal of the UN-Women resource mobilization strategy is to secure a balanced and predictable level of required core and high-quality non-core resources from public and private financing sources in order to effectively implement the strategic plan. The goal of UN-Women is in line with the emphasis in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review on the need for both core and non-core resources to be more predictable and for non-core resources to be flexible, less earmarked and better aligned with the priorities of programme countries and the strategic plans and mandates of United Nations entities.

19. In order to achieve this goal, UN-Women will focus on three complementary approaches:

(a) Deepening, widening and sustaining core contributions from Member States;

(b) Expanding partnerships with the private sector;

(c) Strengthening and diversifying modalities for non-core funding, such as the Entity's upcoming flagship programming initiatives and dedicated financing mechanisms.

IV. Deepening, widening and sustaining the Entity's core contributions from Member States

Deepening core contributions

20. In order to strengthen its donor base and to secure multi-year commitments, UN-Women has actively pursued an increase in the number of the "double-digit donors", meaning donors that contribute $10 million and above to core resources. The messaging of double-digit donor has proved easy to articulate across the decision-making process by Governments and provides a simple and attainable objective for many donors that already contribute funding close to that level. UN-Women aims to reach 16 double-digit donors contributing an average of $15 million annually (see figure II).

Figure II

UN-Women desired donor formula for core resources

(United States dollars)

4 Donors * $20 million = $80 million

(2 achieved = Finland and United Kingdom)

6 Donors * $15 million = $90 million

(2 achieved = Norway and Switzerland)

6 donors * $10 million = $60 million

(2 achieved = Denmark and Sweden)

Remaining donors including private sector = $20 million

Total: $250 million

21. While in 2010 there were only two double-digit core donors (Norway and Spain), this number increased to four in 2011-2012, and then to seven in 2013 (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). This long-term strategy is dependent on the overall financial and economic environment, and the number of double-digit donors regressed to six in 2014, although two Member States contributed to core resources above the $20-million level (Finland and the United Kingdom). This points to the need for continuing the investment in efforts to deepen the donor base and ensure that current levels are sustained in order to prevent overdependence on a small number of donors. The annex lists the top Government donors to UN-Women in 2014.

22. A key challenge of the Entity's core resource mobilization efforts in respect of traditional donors is to reverse the trend of funding which emerges from the legacy of the very low level of contributions to the predecessor entities. This requires a set of interrelated strategies, including a better formulation of the expanded mandate of UN-Women and a better response to expectations from all its constituencies. It also requires better positioning of UN-Women in national decision-making processes and forums through sustained advocacy. Another important success factor resides in the clear description of the impact that UN-Women can make in the lives of women and girls, as well as the full leveraging of the Entity's coordination mandate with the United Nations system.

23. With this in mind, UN-Women has established liaison offices to provide direct outreach in capitals to Governments and help to establish close contact with government institutions and other decision makers, including parliamentarians, at various levels. The liaison offices also engage with other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and foundations. Establishing liaison offices has helped UN-Women to reach multiple donors in an efficient way, while strengthening substantive collaboration on a bilateral basis.

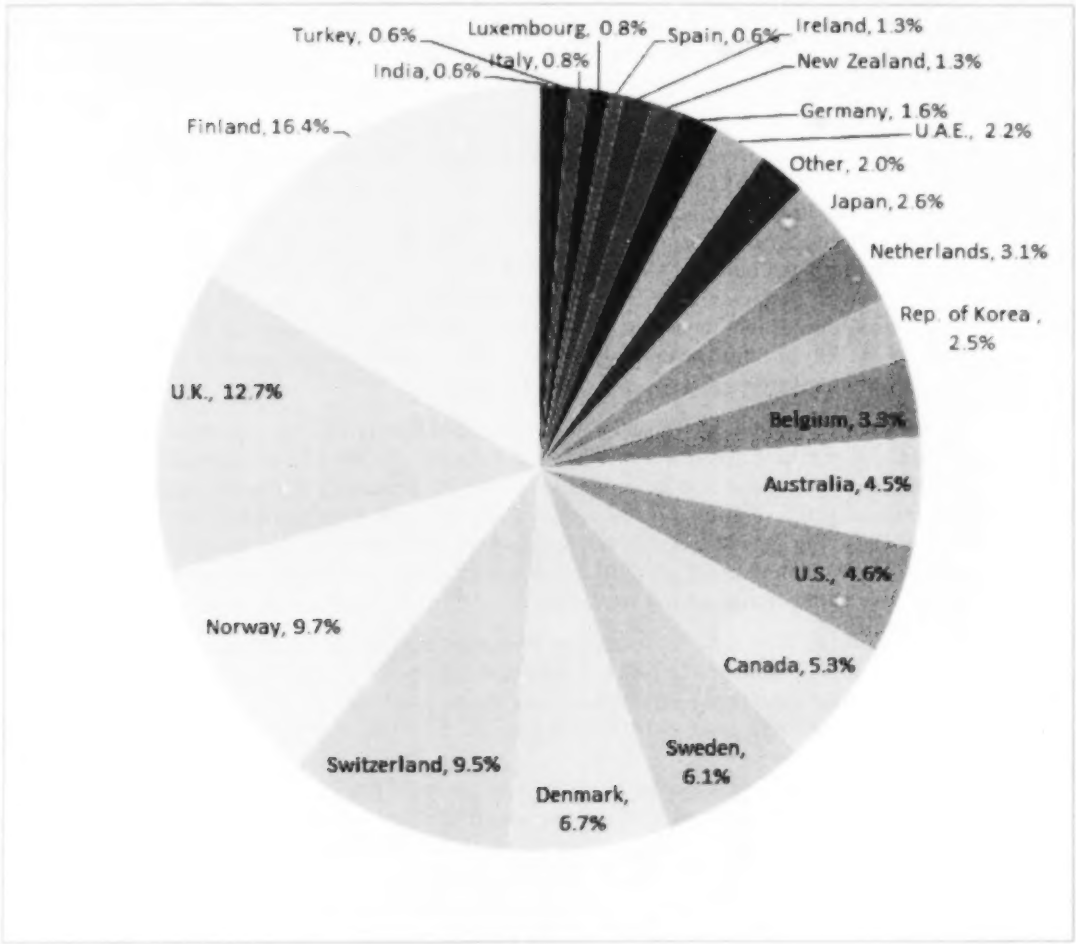
24. Liaison offices with a focus on resource mobilization currently exist in Brussels and Copenhagen. In order to take full advantage of resource mobilization and other engagement opportunities with Japan and the Gulf countries, two additional offices will open in 2015, in Tokyo and Abu Dhabi. The Liaison Office in Brussels has led to increased substantive engagement with the European Union on mutual priority areas and increased multi-year non-core funding from the European Commission. In addition, the Office facilitated the development of an important partnership between UN-Women and the secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. Similarly, the Liaison Office in Copenhagen has been successful in its outreach to the five Nordic countries, with positive results in terms of increased collaboration with national stakeholders on substantive areas and increased advocacy for core and non-core contributions to UN-Women. Both Offices have also been active in their resource mobilization outreach to the private sector.

Widening the donor base

25. In order to widen the donor base among Member States, UN-Women is implementing its 150/250 campaign, which aims to secure from 150 countries a total contribution of $250 million to core resources. In 2014, the number of Government contributors was nearly reached with a record 143 countries. Widening the donor base is also an important strategy to demonstrate the broad political

support that UN-Women and its universal mandate enjoy and to raise awareness and ownership about the Entity's mandate across a broad constituency. Figure III shows the overall distribution of contributions to core resources.

Figure III
Distribution of core contributions to UN-Women from Governments in 2014



26. UN-Women focuses on engaging donors with the highest potential of becoming important contributors to the Entity. As the economic and financial landscape changes, development assistance from emerging or non-traditional donors has been increasing. As part of this strategy, UN-Women is expanding its engagement with the Group of 20 (G-20), which brings together both traditional and emerging donors.

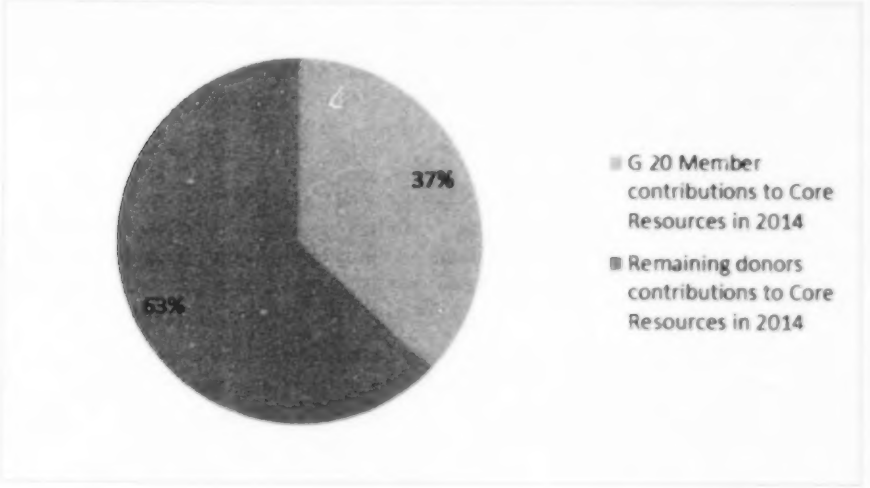
27. Collectively, G-20 economies account for around 85 per cent of the gross world product, 80 per cent of world trade, and two thirds of the world population. Yet they only account for about one third of UN-Women core resources (see figure IV). Without contributions from the United Kingdom, G-20 countries would

account for only 25 per cent of core resources, a share that demonstrates that there is potential for additional resource mobilization within the Group, particularly from donors that are large contributors to official development assistance overall.

28. UN-Women received significant contributions from emerging donors among G-20 countries in 2014, such as Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey. UN-Women is also working with other emerging donors, such as the United Arab Emirates and other Gulf countries, and arrangements for opening a liaison office in Abu Dhabi are at an advanced stage.

29. It is nevertheless important to recognize that, as in the case of the private sector, mobilizing resources from emerging economies will be gradual and that, in the short to medium term, UN-Women will continue to rely largely on contributions from traditional donors.

Figure IV
Percentage of contributions to UN-Women in 2014 from G-20 members



Sustaining the donor base

30. The expanding definition of partnership has led to the inclusion of more activities in the areas of communication, enhancing visibility and enabling donors to leverage their investment in UN-Women with their own constituencies. This is true of Governments, as well as of the private sector and individual donors.

Transparency

31. The responsible stewardship of resources demands accountability and transparency, and UN-Women is committed to full transparency regarding the use of the contributions it receives. This plays an important role in confidence-building with key decision makers, including parliamentarians, and with the general public of contributing countries.

32. UN-Women intends to fully leverage its membership of the International Aid Transparency Initiative to provide visibility for contributions and to build a system

for tracking and sharing up-to-date visual data on implementation through the website and publications, in line with its commitment to the Initiative.

33. UN-Women is also responsive to specific donor needs for monitoring and evaluation and therefore actively participates in donor-led assessments and reviews, such as the Multilateral Organizations Performance Assessment Network, the multilateral aid review framework of the United Kingdom, and the pillar assessment of the European Commission. These assessments have all positively evaluated the Entity's capacity to deliver effectively and efficiently on its mandate.

34. High-quality reporting on both core and non-core resources plays an important role in sustaining and nurturing partnerships, and UN-Women sees the preparation and quality assurance of such reports as an important aspect of partnership management. Donor contributions are also highlighted in the Entity's annual report, which is submitted to the Executive Board, and the media-friendly version of the report, which is widely distributed.

35. As part of its commitment to transparency, UN-Women is committed to independent and objective internal oversight to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its operations. The Office of Audit and Investigations conducts internal audits, related advisory services and investigation services, while the Evaluation Office works to enhance the Entity's effectiveness by strengthening accountability and learning through evaluation and partnership.

Visibility of donor contributions

36. UN-Women recognizes that the visibility given to contributing donors provides an important incentive for enhanced contributions and, with this in mind, regularly showcases donor contributions on its website. Core contributions are updated on a monthly basis.

37. In addition, it shines a spotlight on double-digit donors by publishing online a series of interviews with Ministers that focus on the importance of gender equality to the donor Government; how women's empowerment and gender equality feature in the donor's multilateral aid policy; and the importance of the donor's partnership with UN-Women in channelling the development assistance. UN-Women intends to organize similar interviews with leading contributors from programme countries.

38. Donors are kept abreast of the Entity's funding gap through various visuals on the UN-Women website that, for example, illustrate the number of Government contributors and the total amount of pledges to core resources. Top donor contribution trends are further highlighted through interactive graphs, which show the donor's record of core contributions. UN-Women will continue to improve its website to align it with best practices, such as the programme budget portal of the World Health Organization.[1]

39. In addition, UN-Women is the only United Nations entity that offers membership of its Executive Board (four seats) to top contributing countries. The "contributing countries" category is an incentive for Member States to increase their financial contributions in order to gain visibility and increased involvement through membership of the Executive Board.

[1] Accessible at https://extranet.who.int/programmebudget/.

V. Expanding partnerships with the private sector

40. As a complement to its strategy to deepen, widen and sustain core contributions from Member States, UN-Women puts an increasing emphasis on building strategic partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors, including private companies, foundations and individuals. Although most private sector contributions to date have been allocated to non-core resources, UN-Women aims to shift the trend towards core and soft-earmarked funding. The experience of a number of agencies shows that the private sector can be an important contributor to core resources.

Private companies and foundations

41. UN-Women seeks long-term engagement with private sector companies to promote gender equality in corporate practices, culture, value chains and in the workplace generally. To this end, UN-Women has engaged with private sector partners through innovative modalities with the long-term aim of building a solid group of financial supporters for the Entity.

42. Launched in 2013, the Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council brings together 10 chief executive officers from top global firms. Council members commit to accelerating economic and social progress for women and girls worldwide by combining their expertise, reach and resources for enhanced results. UN-Women intends to broaden the Council's constitution and geographical reach and will develop focused strategies with the group to ensure measurable contributions to the Entity's mandate.

43. Similarly, as part of the HeForShe IMPACT 10x10x10 initiative, 10 chief executive officers have made unprecedented commitments to making gender equality an institutional priority and driving change within and outside their companies. It is expected that this type of engagement will also result in enhanced support to UN-Women in the long term.

44. In 2014, private sector contributions totalled $7.9 million and came from a wide range of companies, such as Coca-Cola, Tupperware Brands, Unilever and Proya Cosmetics, and through partnerships with a number of private foundations.

45. In recognition of the growing importance of private foundations, UN-Women has strategically developed partnerships with a number of foundations, including the Rockefeller Foundation, the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, the UNHATE Foundation, the Cheryl Saban Foundation for Women & Girls, the Ford Foundation, the Zonta International Foundation, l'OCCITANE Foundation and the Angelica Fuentes Foundation. The Entity's approach with respect to foundations goes beyond traditional fundraising and includes a sustained commitment to supporting the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in their strategies and priorities, thereby influencing long-term financing goals. A number of prospective partnerships with foundations are currently in the process of being developed.

46. UN-Women has also developed new types of partnerships to broaden the reach to non-traditional supporters. The newly launched partnership with Valencia Football Club is one example. Through this partnership, the Club is committed to providing a minimum contribution to core resources on a regular basis and enhancing the Entity's visibility among its millions of supporters. It is expected that

the partnership will encourage public giving and support efforts to raise awareness about gender equality issues among the general public.

Individuals

47. As part of its private sector strategy, UN-Women also targets private individuals, including high-net-worth individuals, company employees, and the general public. UN-Women aims to develop a pool of individual donors who contribute to core resources and support its mandate through regular donations.

48. To this end, UN-Women will capitalize on the success of several of its campaigns, including HeForShe, UNITE to End Violence against Women and Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It up for Gender Equality. By investing in proven fundraising tools and techniques for converting campaign supporters and advocates into individual donors, UN-Women will aim at creating a strong base of financial supporters committed to regular giving.

49. In particular, UN-Women will leverage its network of national committees, which are independent non-governmental organizations that work to raise awareness about the UN-Women mandate and raise funding for the Entity. These committees already play an important role in advocating with their respective Governments, and with parliamentarians and other decision makers, to increase their financial support to UN-Women. They have in addition demonstrated their ability to facilitate partnerships with private companies.

50. Currently, the total annual contribution from national committees ranges from $1 million to $1.5 million. However, there is no doubt that the national committees have great potential and could generate significant funding for UN-Women in the medium to long term. In the coming years, UN-Women will work closely with national committees to develop individual public giving programmes, such as monthly-giving initiatives.

51. National committees currently operate in 14 countries: Australia, Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. While public giving initiatives will be established in a limited number of countries in the short term, the number of targeted countries will be increased in the medium term.

52. These initiatives will require investments in digital and other marketing channels, as well as capacity-building for the national committees, the majority of which are run by volunteers and vary in their institutional capacity and results. UN-Women already provides technical support on governance and fundraising to strengthen the capacity of its national committees. This support will be enhanced to increase individual public giving and to help to create networks of high-net-worth individuals that financially support UN-Women.

53. In order to adequately optimize funding opportunities from private donors, whose requirements, culture and expectations differ from those of Governments, specific technical skills, tools and adequate capacity is required. UN-Women will regularly assess the cost-effectiveness of its resource mobilization efforts with the private sector and right-size its resource allocation to this area.

VI. Strengthening and diversifying modalities for non-core funding

54. The Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, notes that the financing of United Nations operational activities for development in the form of earmarked non-core resources has grown significantly over time and accounted for some 75 per cent of total resources in 2013, compared with 56 per cent in 1998. Looking at development-related activities alone, if humanitarian assistance activities are excluded, it can be seen that non-core resources accounted for some 69 per cent of total resources in 2013, compared with 51 per cent in 1998 (A/70/62-E/2015/4, para.15).

55. Consistent with this trend, non-core resources is the fastest growing source of funding for UN-Women. The Entity raised $159 million in non-core resources in 2014, representing an increase of 35 per cent from 2013. Sweden, Norway, the European Commission, Australia and Switzerland are the largest donors to non-core resources, with a combined total of $ 66 million. Total funding from existing and new private sector partners for 2014 amounted to $7.9 million, up from $5.6 million in 2013.

56. In addition to Member States and the private sector, UN-Women will increasingly leverage other sources of non-core funds, including the financial institutions and regional development banks, such as the World Bank, cost-sharing by partner Governments, such as Brazil, Cameroon and Mexico, and innovative sources, such as climate funds.

57. The UN-Women strategy to strengthen and diversify existing sources of non-core funding will be based on a limited number of scalable flagship programming initiatives and joint financing mechanisms.

Flagship programming initiatives

58. UN-Women is codifying its operational activities in the five priority areas of the strategic plan and consolidating them into a limited number of high-impact, scalable flagship programming initiatives. By leveraging the economies of scale inherent to programming, the flagship programming initiatives will reduce transaction costs, increase efficiency and ensure that core resources do not subsidize non-core funding.

59. The flagship programming initiatives will complement and build on the ongoing work of the Entity's country offices and are fully aligned with the 2014-2017 strategic plan. Consistent with recommendations from the quadrennial comprehensive policy review on the flexibility of non-core resources, financing partners will have the option of softly earmarking contributions at the thematic level through the flagship programming initiatives. This thematic earmarking option will complement existing soft earmarking options at the regional or country level through direct funding to strategic notes and annual workplans.

60. Each flagship programming initiative is based on a comprehensive theory of change that articulates the causal linkages and actions required by all partners in order to achieve transformative change within each strategic plan priority area. The flagship programming initiatives will align the Entity's composite normative,

coordination and operational mandates to meet the unique requirements of each development context in a consistent manner. They will enable UN-Women to provide a substantive coordination for results by allowing the Entity to identify its specific role, as well as the strategic partnerships required within each context to achieve transformative change. Lessons learned and best practices from the implementation of the flagship programming initiatives will be translated into knowledge products to inform the policy work and future programming efforts of UN-Women.

61. Most flagship programming initiatives will be implemented through a portfolio of country projects supported by regional and/or global technical facilities as required. Thus, UN-Women offices will lead efforts to mobilize funding for the flagship programming initiatives in a move that recognizes that decision-making by donors regarding the allocation of funds is heavily decentralized to the country level and is consistent with the Entity's ambition to leverage additional cost-sharing by the partner Government.

Joint financing mechanisms

62. Guided by the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (A/70/62-E/2015/4, para. 118), UN-Women will further strengthen joint programming processes where appropriate. Joint funding mechanisms are thematically based and aligned with the specific strategic goals of an agency. Consistent with the emphasis on system coherence, they have become a major feature of the broader global financing landscape over the past 15 years and are likely to grow in importance in support of the post-2015 development agenda.

63. Since its inception, UN-Women has received over $120 million through United Nations joint funding mechanisms, including joint programmes, "Delivering as one" funds and global United Nations funds, notably the Peacebuilding Fund.[2] Country and global thematic funds are expected to play an increasingly important role in the financing architecture of UN-Women as the Entity steps up its support for women's engagement in humanitarian action, the maintenance of peace and security and climate action. Notably, UN-Women will leverage strategic partnerships with other United Nations agencies to access the Central Emergency Response Fund and the Green Climate Fund.

64. Furthermore, UN-Women will continue to perform the secretariat function of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, the only inter-agency grant-making mechanism exclusively devoted to ending violence against women and girls. In addition to multi-agency financing mechanisms, UN-Women also manages its own Fund for Gender Equality, which was established with an original contribution of $65 million from Spain. The Fund, a grant-making mechanism, focuses on women's political and economic empowerment.

65. These mechanisms allow donors to fund direct grants to government institutions and non-governmental organizations after a rigorous, transparent and competitive award process. In addition to reducing transaction costs for the donor, the funds simplify the process of managing and reporting on contributions. Both the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Fund for Gender Equality have mobilized resources from Member States, UN-Women national committees and

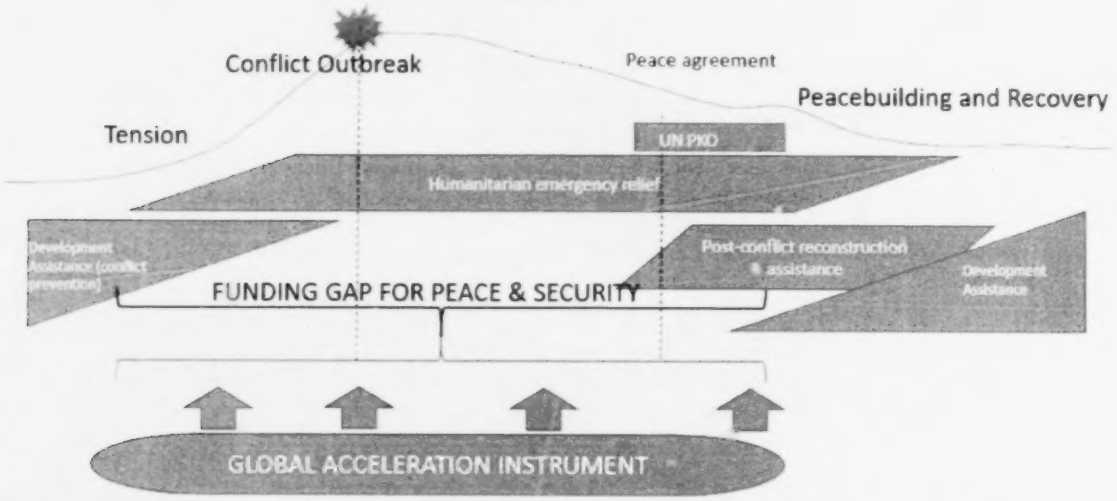
[2] Source: Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (http://mptf.undp.org).

the private sector. In 2014, the former raised $14.8 million from 22 donors, while the latter raised $1.9 million plus a $4 million commitment from 11 donors.

66. The codification of UN-Women programming and its consolidation into a limited number of flagship programming initiatives will also enable the Entity to better assess funding needs and gaps by thematic area. For certain flagship programming initiatives, UN-Women will establish dedicated financing facilities to address structural financing gaps. In partnership with Member States, civil society and the United Nations, UN-Women will launch in 2015 a global acceleration instrument for women, peace and security and humanitarian action, whose main function will be to address the current financing gap and improve the timeliness of investments in women's participation, leadership and empowerment in crisis response, and peace and security settings (figure V). Recognizing the critical role that local civil society organizations play in creating and sustaining peace, this mechanism will invest in strengthening local organizations, particularly grass-roots women's organizations, and improving coordination and policy coherence.

Figure V

Role that the planned global acceleration instrument will play in filling the funding gap in the transition from crisis to peacebuilding and recovery



* *According to a recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee study in 2012-2013 only 2 per cent of aid to peace and security in fragile States targeted gender equality.*

Source: The 2011 *Thematic Guidelines on Peacebuilding* issued by the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

VII. Conclusion

67. As this brief indicates, the donor base of UN-Women is growing. How growth remains uneven across Member States and is too slow to support the full implementation of the strategic plan and transformative changes for women and girls.

68. Activities relating to the 20-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action have contributed to greater visibility and attention to the major gaps, including gaps in financing, that continue to hamper the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda. As part of its resource mobilization efforts, UN-Women will continue to drive initiatives to increase awareness about underinvestment in gender equality across the board, and in UN-Women in particular, with the aim of scaling up contributions to close current funding and implementation gaps.

69. In this context, UN-Women plans to work closely with the States members of its Executive Board and other Member States to strengthen the financing of the Entity. The structured dialogue on financing the UN-Women strategic plan, 2014-2017, plays an important role in this regard. As part of the process for the mid-term review of the strategic plan, UN-Women will take stock of progress and opportunities for financing. The Entity will hold a series of informal meetings to examine financing, as well as related resource mobilization strategies, with the aim of presenting to the Executive Board a full report on the costing of the strategic plan.

70. The Executive Board may wish:

1. To take note of the brief on resource mobilization as an element of the ongoing structured dialogue on financing the UN-Women strategic plan and to welcome the progress made by the Entity in this regard.

2. To encourage UN-Women to engage in informal dialogues with Member States between Board sessions to ensure ongoing progress on the critical issue of funding for the Entity.

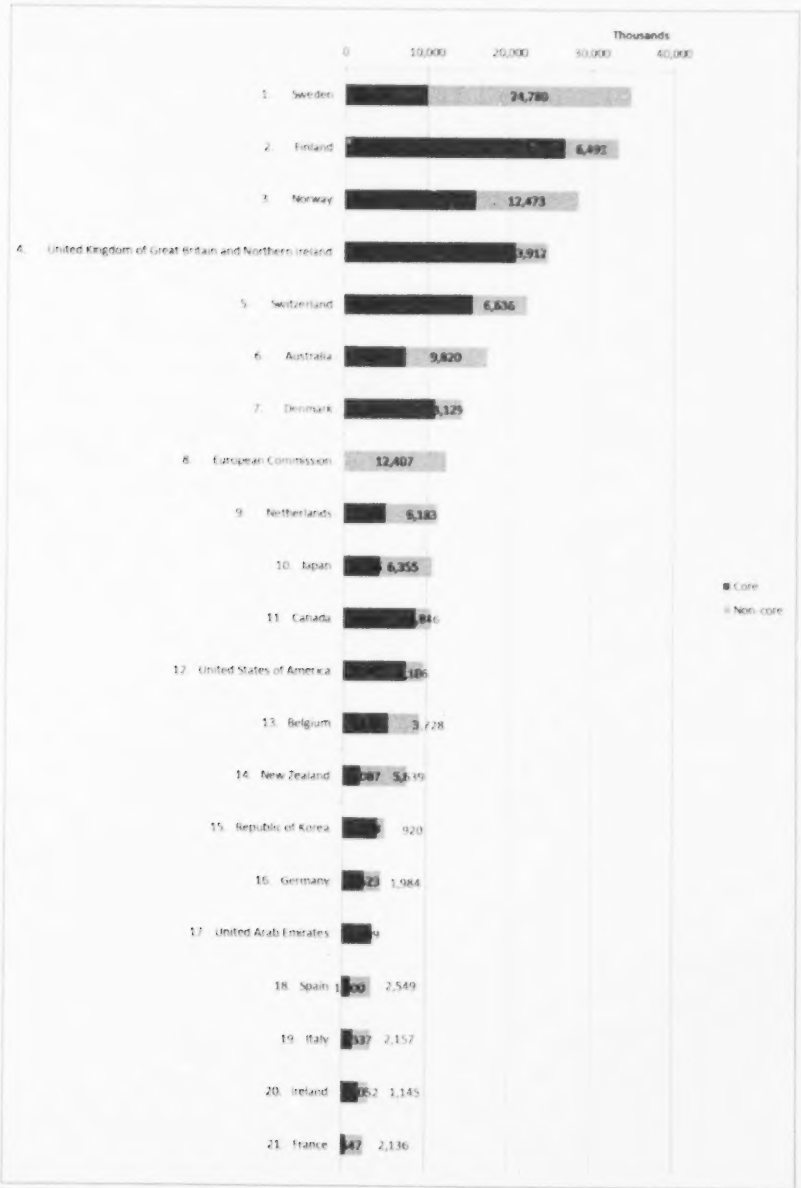
3. To emphasize that UN-Women needs increased financial resources in order to fully implement its strategic plan, and in this regard to encourage all Member States to increase their core and flexible non-core contributions to UN-Women in a predictable and stable manner and, where feasible, on a multi-year basis.

4. To request UN-Women, in the context of the structured dialogue on financing, to submit a report at its second regular session of 2016 containing an analysis of the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided for the implementation of the strategic plan, including the funding gaps.

Annex

Top contributors in 2014 to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

(United States dollars)



Notes:

1. Non-core figures include the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Fund for Gender Equality.
2. The European Commission of the European Union is a Government member organization.